



The voice of
Scotland's
environment
community



Realising Sustainable Development in Scotland The crucial role of LINK

Report on the LINK Members' Congress

Held 16 November 2015.

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Helen Todd welcomed everyone to the Members' Congress, to explore what it means to be an effective eNGO looking ahead and learning lessons from the recent past. The five talks set the scene for later discussions. The context for LINK is our new Strategy to which people here today had contributed. LINK is improving its processes, internally on priority setting, and being clearer to external audiences about what we want.

HOW THE ENGO SECTOR CAN HELP IN REALISING SD GOALS

Bridget Campbell, Director, Environment & Forestry Directorate, Scottish Government.

The Environment and Forestry Directorate is the lead on natural resources and environmental quality and it sponsors agencies including SNH and SEPA. It is a major funder of research, has oversight of Forestry Commission Scotland and Forest Enterprise, amounting to 9 % of Scotland's land - lots of coverage. In this role I do not personally lead on (but work alongside those who do) renewable energy and climate change, marine and agriculture. I lead on peatland and air quality, which of course are very important for climate change. There is a lot of effort to build effective relationships within the group of Directors whose policies connect. After some months in post I can explain how subjects are positioned, what are priorities for action, and what the hopes are of the eNGOs.

Nicola Sturgeon's cabinet team have not changed the overall purpose of government, but they adopted new priorities which show a change of emphasis on **jobs**, a **fairer society** and passing **power to communities**. This emphasis is an important change, which needs to be taken seriously. In relation to every major decision they will be asking how it looks against these three priorities. I can see clear connections with environment and forestry, and Richard Lochhead has a portfolio which contributes vitally to the economy. 100,000 jobs depend on Scotland's clean and green image which makes it very important to invest. Safeguarding the natural environment is important for tourism, where there are many jobs, and the natural environment is central to increasing physical exercise and becoming a healthier nation.

This is nothing new here for us, though I would encourage spelling out the relevance of the environment for jobs and inequalities. These are not connections that others make readily. The third priority is about empowering people and communities. There was a huge increase in public engagement during the referendum. Rural bodies have lots to teach government here, how to grow capacity, and engage people in management of the land and landscape. LINK members have lessons to pass on.

Where to put our effort? Government is shrinking. We are all thinking about where to put effort to be most effective. A worthwhile direction for NGOs is behaviour change for citizens. This is not just for an easy life for those who work for government. What is important is the big picture and how people think about the decisions they make.

Scotland and climate change. Government has worked on its policies and proposals. We need, as citizens, to change our behaviours. This is to do with changing the spirit of the age. Not so long ago when considering which public health changes they might make, the government felt that there was nothing to be done to stop smoking. What changed before the smoking legislation was the spirit of the age. Ministers spotted that the change had happened and seized the opportunity.

We should focus on our effort to stimulate change about how people think about the environment. John Ireland, Deputy Director for Climate Change (present), is tasked to work with the public to encourage changes in behaviour. We have a part to play in helping change public opinion. Talk to him, find ways to get Parliament and government swept along with the wave. Small and large organisations can play their part.

One reason for applying for this current job was to get more done, to get an overall strategy to fit other stuff into. Things will change if citizens want us to. Make more of that. At least most people have heard of climate change, it

is not same for biodiversity. Example of one of the least persuasive slogans I've seen on a reusable carrier bag: Recycle or Die, it is not subtle. The message is too compressed, not quite right, though in the right direction. Find more subtle ways to proceed.

Comments

Accepting the challenge of engaging the public, the problem is the pace at which we need to see change around climate. It does not allow us time to gather momentum beyond where we have got to. Within this dynamic leadership from Government is needed.

Scottish Government has given leadership, there is work to do to align actions. The pace at which it is becoming evident is getting faster. The rightness of the decision to lead will become evident. The trick is getting action in behind that. With biodiversity we need to take a stronger leadership role, there is a challenge around how to talk about it.

These issues, climate change and biodiversity loss are so intimately linked, address one and you have to address the other. Yes, there are too many different strategies, which is not helpful. Some of the work is about aligning, focusing.

Some local authorities are not very engaged in big environmental issues. Yes, they think of environment in terms of amenity. Implementation of the Community Empowerment Act may change that, there is a duty to be involved in community planning partnerships, an established mechanism, and some good examples. It is an important issue, we have not yet succeeded in getting most local authorities to focus on these matters.

BOTH SIDES NOW

Ross Finnie, LINK President and former Environment and Rural Development Minister.

See [presentation](#).

As a Minister (Rural Affairs 1999-2001, Environment and Rural Development (2001-07) I thought the LINK delegation to meetings were very well organised, with various characters playing 'good and bad cop', others keeping the peace, some individuals were truly outstanding. Now there are many excellent people in the team. A word of caution, these meetings are not just about subject knowledge, we need to be clear on our priorities and marshal the arguments in a way that engages with the Minister and elicits a response. It is very easy to look interested and know there is not a lot to do because no request has been made.

Structures are still very similar today with long term Ministers or Cabinet Secretary in post. Government's approach has not moved hugely, it still welcomes the point of contact LINK provides.

Directorates have grown. Previously government departments had not served a government as such. The strategic approach is now much more sophisticated in terms of ministerial priorities. The policy delivery process has changed. The pathway is not clear. Role of LINK in demanding to know more about strategies and outcomes. Government is now more assertive about what it has achieved.

LINK's approach is very organised. I'm not sure we have paid enough attention to the tactics of engagement with government. Bridget is asking us to engage with government's priorities, we need to be clear about our priorities.

What is LINK going to use its effectiveness for? Have we got our sense of measurement on achievements? Some examples:

- The situation with White Fish stocks was bad and it still is. There are claims to have solved the situation with discards - not so.
- Agriculture is dominated by CAP. Reform of CAP has regressed since 2007. We want it to be a land use policy. This is a 'Tin' issue - it says Agriculture Policy therefore that's what it is about. Ross is not wholly persuaded that the EU can continue to argue the budget spent on agriculture.
- Land reform too was an issue, including Access legislation. Now the problem remains the same, caused in part by the Human Rights Act imposed on an existing feudal system.
- LINK was pushing for more on the sustainable development in 2002 and still is. There used to be a committee with external members overseeing the way government acted, which input to the spending review, asking whether finances and use of resources had something to do on it.
- There was a biodiversity strategy, still no progress.

Be careful not to get too sucked in. Keep the sense of critical friend, not just contributing to another's agenda, and contributing to debate. LINK's resources are in its people. Government now is more resistant to criticism.

Comments

A crucial part of getting good Access legislation was that different parties had sat round the table negotiating for years. Some of us argued that process for energy, and there has never been a negotiating space with farmers on CAP. Ross regretted not widening membership of the Agriculture strategy group in 1999, farmers are not keen on others taking part. I suspect across government there are more groups set up to do what you are asking for. There is a limit for servicing them. And where you get them being put together, as Bridget said, it will be the people that fit in with government priorities. If the issue is not already there it will be hellish to get it onto the agenda. Government generally is better, keener to get a consensus that agrees with them, which is not same as a consensus. It is not going to set up task forces. See how bad that is for LINK itself, regarding bureaucracy.

HOW THE PRIVATE SECTOR INFLUENCES GOVERNMENT AND THE WIDER POLICY COMMUNITY

Ross Martin, CEO Scottish Council for Development and Industry

All of the tactics used and ways of influencing are the same as for the NGO sector.

Political context – there is much talk about the one party state. It has always been that way in Scotland. The colour of the tin changes, but not the tin. There has been political dominance across every level of government; Labour, Lib/Lab, now SNP. Coalition was a culture shock here, it changed the nature of the way others engaged with government. Scotland also had a properly pluralist parliament. It never took that promise of pluralism into government. There was mass public support before the parliament, then people were locked out and it went back to the old ways, other than the coalition. There remains the same political construct, a bit left socially, a bit right economically. SNP has mastered that act and is garnering more support. Labour had that habit, and lost it. Political parties are as clouds over public opinion, they stay fixed. This sets the context for discussion with government and any of our tactics in dealing with it.

The point Bridget Campbell raised - behavioural change is driven by public opinion, carrying politicians along, whether on smoking, recycling - these changes were made because the public wanted it. Back to the earlier question on climate change leadership, I would argue that leaderships starts with you and me and anyone else with an interest.

There are three ways of engagement at SCDI, all will be familiar.

Alignment. Your idea, your policy suggestion that has been through a manifesto, if you can align it with something that's already happening, the chances are high. Eg, Air Passenger Duty and its reduction, abolition; SCDI members in the private sector see it as an unfair tax which should be addressed. They successfully got it into SNP psyche, so this can be seen as a success.

Second, **help the party in power deliver against a policy they have**, making it stronger. Example is more business improvement districts, public private partnerships to raise additional taxation for a specific basket of needs. It started in town centres, is now spreading outwards.

Third, **get them when they are open to influence**. Going into an election is when politicians are most receptive, eg when at the Centre for Scottish Public Policy, Single Transferable Vote for Local Government elections chimed with Jack McConnell's frustration with his party. That policy was supported by CSPP and many others.

The private sector engages in much the same way as the eNGOs do and there is a lot more commonality than may be seen at first sight.

Air Passenger Duty - the policy making machine is prone to incoherence. There is no integrated transport system, or policy, instead a raft of individual initiatives, completely incoherently looking at inputs rather than desired outcomes.

A key aspect of each of three examples is that we are all in same bus, and need to ensure when articulating for policy change, that we recognise commonality rather than emphasising differences. Environment and the economy are two sides of same coin rather than competing interests. If we want to see sustainable growth, SCDI and environmentalists should be working more closely together.

Comments

LINK's Economics group should speak to SCDI on sustainable economic growth.

Freedom of Information requests showed that before the moratorium on fracking, access to government from the business sector was huge. Is that a good thing and if so how do we get it? Access should be open to all. SCDI has no view on fracking yet. It will be focussing on the evidence, debating at its forum in March. The issue is open data and how development of the economy is reliant on all organisations to share information in a way that allows collaboration vs competition. Transition from fossil fuels is a case in point - oil companies which competed fiercely are now seeing collaboration as the only way.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING BETWEEN ENGOS AND GOVERNMENT

Jonathan Hughes, Chief Executive of the Scottish Wildlife Trust, former LINK Trustee and a member of the global Council of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The presentation will consider three aspects of partnerships between governments and eNGOs:

- Public and government opinion on charities
- The typologies of partnerships between government and eNGOs in Scotland
- Ideas for future collaboration

I confess I've been shocked by figures in a couple of recent reports regarding public opinion on charities. The first from a [report](#) produced by the Charities Aid Foundation with SCVO found that 54% of the public agree charities are trustworthy and act in the public interest. That is pretty low in my view. We clearly need to rebuild the trust that has been lost in recent time. Slightly more encouraging is the figures that 64% agree it is important for charities to highlight if they believe government policies will negatively affect people. 61% think that that money given to charities by government should not be the focus of spending cuts but only 46% believe that charities are good

at demonstrating the impact of our work. We need to improve that last figure and be much clearer and transparent when explaining the positive impact we have.

More context was provided by an NFPsynergy [report](#) in September 2015 which found that 62% of Conservative MPs think charities are too political as opposed to 4% of Labour MPs. This is a quite startling contrast. Moreover, 40 % of Conservative MPs agree that charities should not campaign in parliament. These figures will probably be very different in Scotland but the fact remains many politicians feel charities are highly political. This is something we need to be mindful of and guard against.

That brings me on to government - eNGO partnerships. Here I have identified a typology of seven different models:

1. **Legislative scrutineers.** LINK has, for example contributed to improving, clarifying and strengthening legislation throughout the life of the Scottish Parliament including Acts on the water environment, land reform, biodiversity, climate change and the marine environment. LINK also plays a role in ensuring legislation is implemented - through regular engagement with parliamentary committees for example.
2. **Policy shapers.** Examples include LINK's involvement in the Climate Change Report on Policies and Proposals Scotland, the National Marine Plan, the Land Use Strategy and biodiversity strategies and roadmaps.
3. **Trusted Advisors.** LINK member bodies provide advice to government backed by sound evidence and science. The RSPB for example has a large and well respected conservation science department providing data extremely useful for informing land management decisions.
4. **Project Partners.** Three species focused on-the-ground recent examples of this are the Scottish wildcat action plan partnership, the Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels project and the Scottish Beaver Trial. All of these have involved government agencies working with eNGOs as true delivery partners. Acting collectively in this way can make significant difference and leverage funding to achieve bigger impact.
5. **Direct Deliverers.** The Scottish Wildlife Trust, National Trust for Scotland, RSPB Scotland and the John Muir Trust are among several bodies who have funding agreements with Scottish Natural Heritage to provide measurable outcomes for people and nature, driven by targets on formal and informal education provision and designated areas condition assessments for example.
6. **External Champions.** Several LINK members have international partnerships through which they help promote Scotland's efforts on biodiversity, climate change action and sustainability. These include the Birdlife and WWF networks. This year for the second time, the World Forum for Natural Capital organised by the Scottish Wildlife Trust put Scotland on the world stage by bringing 600 delegates from 45 countries to Edinburgh.
7. **Constructive Challengers.** Perhaps the most contentious of the seven is the role eNGOs play as constructive challengers. Our preference is always to do this directly with government rather than playing it out in the media - though occasionally we do press the nuclear button! This can of course be helpful to both parties, for example making the case for fairer budget allocation, or for the very existence of government agencies. Environmental NGOs can also take a longer term perspective not always easy for politicians elected for relatively short terms.

Finally, looking to the future. Bridget Campbell of the Scottish Government mentioned the government's three current priorities of jobs, equality and empowerment. Innovation is another priority set out in the Government Economic Strategy. The eNGOs have a key role to play in delivering all these priorities. One of our strengths is that we can dare to dream and, in doing so, foster new solutions to intractable problems. An example here is the Marine Act. A decade ago we dared to dream but then made it reality to the long term benefit of the health and wealth of Scotland's seas.

On inclusiveness and equality, LINK and its members help give a voice to voiceless - we are working in communities across Scotland, speaking to people every day. We also give a voice to the environment, speaking up for nature within decision making circles, and promoting environmental justice in urban and rural areas. The links between equality, environmental justice and well-being have long been known to LINK. We will continue to use environmental protection and restoration to empower and engage people across Scotland's communities.

A word on leadership - Jim Collins in his book *Good to Great*, claims there are two essential characteristics of great leadership. The first is an iron professional drive to succeed - something the SNP government has been remarkable at to their credit. The second characteristic is humility – something that doesn't always sit easily with the first! Dare I say that LINK and its members can help government and parliament with humility? We are in many ways a cipher for public opinion and often have compelling and rational arguments for improving Scotland's environment. We'll continue to put these arguments forward, but we'll do this with a good dollop of humility and a deep sense of duty to society, and our environment.

My final thought takes me back to the international dimension and to Scotland's opportunity to be a global exemplar for sustainability action. The [Sustainable Development Goals](#), all 17, are a fantastic holistic policy framework. Bridget Campbell spoke of aligning them with current priorities, and I absolutely agree. We cannot tackle climate change without tackling all 17 goals together in my view. Globally and locally, the Global Goals as they are, cover the whole gamut of public policy. They have international backing and our government in Scotland has signed up to them. There is huge potential for LINK to take them forward in partnership with government. The Rio Group, of which I am proud to be a founding member, will continue to socialise the goals in Scotland and press for their coherent and urgent implementation. We have the chance to forge new productive partnerships around implementation of the goals. I hope they will keep us fresh, respectful and innovative in the coming years and drive a sea change for sustainable development in Scotland.

HOW STRONG AND INDEPENDENT IS THE ENGO VOICE?

Deborah Long, former LINK Chair, head of Plantlife Scotland and convenor of LINK's Wildlife Forum.

See [presentation](#).

Some of what I say will be in counterpoint to the previous talk. Biodiversity is what I know best. There will be many parallels with other issues. With the power of hindsight I should have picked something easier!

In 2004, we had a Biodiversity Strategy. LINK produced *Delivering the Goods*. In 2013 we identified our (NGO) benchmarks, what we need to do to meet the Biodiversity Targets. In 2013 we have the 2020 challenge. I agree with Bridget about the name, we should call biodiversity nature or wildlife.

Is there a biodiversity crisis? It depends on who you talk to.

In 2013 Scottish Government launched the *2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity* with two quotes from recent Environment Ministers. There has been no new statement yet from this Minister.

The contentious Scotsman article in 2007 featuring criticism from the eNGOs on lack of progress provoked quite a reaction. We did not hit any of our targets. What we have done is a lot of deckchair arranging. In 2008 and 2013,

the process reorganised, and again now. Will it make a difference? We will probably not hit our targets. There is a problem of going through the process against a background of no new resources.

What to do? We have been working as partners with government since 2004, been fully involved at all levels. Do we continue to put our resources into this? I have chaired one group, and calculate that £20,000 worth of time was spent getting one job done over that time, part funded by our members who want us to do conservation on the ground. We have also spent time building support among our members. We have tried for 11 years. Do we need new tactics or should we stick with it?

Ross suggested we engage more directly with the Minister. We have had a bit more media activity in terms of protected areas. How far will it get us? With the current rejig, government and the agencies are sitting together on a board with strategic oversight of the Biodiversity Strategy and the Land Use Strategy. NGOs are not part of it. Are we happy with this?

Changing public opinion - Membership of eNGOs is going up in bad economic times. We have more people as our members and that is an interesting dilemma for us. What do we do with all that goodwill?

How strong is our voice? Essentially it depends what we want to do with it. It is up to us. We need to ask ourselves how we should employ the resources we have, to meet the targets on which our members pay us to deliver.

Delegates were invited to write their thoughts on post it notes, which Deborah collated:

An assessment from the audience on tactics to achieve progress in relation to biodiversity targets in 2015.

Stay in the tent: 5 votes:

- Work more in partnership with others inside the tent
- Praise government when progress is made
- Focus on individual Ministers
- Frame asks within context of government priorities
- Use the LINK voice as a single voice and also retain the diversity of eNGO voices rather than using just one.

Do both: Stay in the tent but also work outside the tent: 7 votes

- Stay in but be more active outside the tent; be sensitive to opportunities & use creative approaches
- Adopt a single issue – eg nail sustainable economic growth;

Adopt a third way: 23 votes

- Most popular suggestion (6 votes): engage the public more through:
- Rebuild an emotional attachment to nature; citizen science; using popular culture; use simple messages; connect with what matters to communities; use youtube
- Work with new partners: SCDI & their members; a well-known personality to front a popular campaign (aka Hugh FW fish fight); Spice; Scottish Waterways Trust; media
- Learn from other successful groups – what did they do right?
- Campaign for a Scottish Environment parliament; Scottish Environment Poker Club; write an environmentalist's guide to lobbying (planning)

Key highlights of the exercise:

- We need to use more opportunities outside the tent (while endeavouring to stay in)
- We need to raise public support for nature

- We should work with a wider range of partners

WORKSHOP REPORTS.

Delegates split into 4 workshops. Each workshop was asked to draw out:

1. evidence of success in moving towards environmental sustainability with emphasis on the eNGO contribution involved
2. what this has meant in practical and strategic terms for different eNGOs
3. how past experience should inform future action
4. new ways of working to consider to increase impact & improve environmental outcomes.

Two short case studies were prepared in advance for each workshop to illustrate some of the issues for the workshop theme, to start discussions.

1. THE ROLES OF GOVERNMENT, THE ENGOS AND THE WIDER POLICY COMMUNITY IN EFFECTING CHANGE

Facilitator Phoebe Cochrane. Notes by Lisa Webb

Forestry – Charles Dundas (Woodland Trust Scotland) Charles began by commenting that there were several examples he could have used as a forestry case study eg the proposed public forestry sell-off and the value created by the public debate on this issue. However, he focused on the example of the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (2006-2013). The objective of the survey was to map all native woodland across Scotland and assess condition and grazing pressure. Others in marine and non-woodland terrestrial conservation envied such an approach! The survey provided useful indications of pressures and status of native woodlands eg 54% of Scotland's native woodlands in unsatisfactory condition. The eNGOs took the results to the Cabinet Secretary and Scottish Government to voice concerns. Fortunately, the SNP 2011 manifesto had a pledge to consult on ancient woodland loss. A cross-sector meeting was held with the Cabinet Secretary and, consequently, Scotland has a list of woodland conservation recommendations - there is a native woodland planting target and highlights need to address deer management and Invasive Non Native Species issues. In conclusion, this is an example of how eNGOs worked with others to effect a policy change although it is too early to tell if it will lead to meaningful changes on the ground.

Land use - Vicki Swales (RSPB Scotland). Vicki noted that looking back over the last 15-20 years there has been increasing discourse on land use, for example on issues of integrated land use, ecosystem services and, more recently, rewilding. Often we take a very sectoral approach to land use issues with a focus on agriculture or forestry or game management - this isn't helpful. When considering key players, Government is obviously a main one in terms of research, funding and policies. Vicki gave examples of the many previous strategy documents on agriculture, forestry, deer management and biodiversity (again highlighting sectoral divisions). The Land Use Strategy (LUS) was hoped to bring in elements of integration. Scottish Government has done less well, to date, in joining up land use and land reform issues. Vicki questioned whether Government is often trying to find a compromise or middle ground between competing interests. Has Government fallen to one side (private interests) more than others (public)? The eNGOs have given a lot of technical input to policies and processes such as the LUS, and have also developed projects that aim to demonstrate integrated land use, eg Living Landscapes and Futurescapes -but have eNGOs done less well in terms of campaigning and public mobilisation? Also, where are the other groups in this debate? The farming and forestry lobby is very powerful and could eNGOs do more to bring other voices to

the fore? In addition, where are think tanks eg Institute for Fiscal Studies in this area? The debate on land use happens in 'narrow confines' (same people, same discussions) and there is a need to reach out and get others involved in the debate.

Evidence of success

While remaining a key challenger, eNGOs work well with Government. Examples of success include manifesto commitments, allotments and the Community Empowerment Act, Marine (Scotland) Act, sustainability education in schools.

Making the most of opportunities eg peatland restoration and climate change targets.

eNGOs developing new ideas eg Natural Capital

Implications for practice and strategy for eNGOs

There is a need to be patient!

Important to talk to non-NGOs and 'unusual suspects' (eg forming alliances with finance and business)

Be opportunistic

Focus effort eg work on fewer things; work to bring about behaviour change

Target influential people

Think longer term

Use social media

"Asymmetric warfare" – approach issues in an innovative way

Learn from the private sector

Form mergers and share resources where possible

Praise the Government where appropriate

Past experience informing future action

Past experience indicates it's often a case of "Hang around until you get lucky"

Be opportunistic and creative

Look for allies

Take solutions to Government

New ways of working to increase impact

Use themes that connect all people and explain them in ways which connect

Broaden the reach outwith the environment sector – use issues that connect all of society. 'Food' is an example of a campaigning issue that can connect all

Do more to create political space

Look for win-wins

Policy which engages people

Use an overarching positive, solutions-led narrative

Be ambitious and engage in the mainstream

Make use of the Community Empowerment Act to engage with decision-making

Turn a negative message into positive action (Citizen Science work around Chalara did this well).

Report back to plenary:

1. There have been improved relations between eNGOs and Scottish Government since devolution, though we must not be complacent.
2. Opportunism, be creative, rebrand some of our old ideas and campaigns.
3. Engage with people, be ambitious and engage with mainstream.
4. Create alliances with other sectors.
5. Consider how enhanced communications would be fruitful to create more political space.
6. Focus on behaviour change.

2. How the private sector influences government and the wider policy community including eNGOs

Facilitator Simon Pepper, Note, Alice Walsh

Deer Management - Diarmid Hearn (National Trust for Scotland). In policy making, the force of the *status quo* is the most powerful. Government is neutral. There are lots of views within it, similarly within the private sector and within LINK. Smaller tight groups are easier to keep control of, larger coalitions have a more difficult job. For change to happen there are hurdles at every stage. There is not a wide interest in deer. Those that are interested, in the private sector and in LINK, are very much interested.

The main trend is major expansion of deer including into urban areas. Shooting or fencing are the means of control. Deer roam free. Landowners have shooting rights in certain seasons. Deer are a shared problem and opportunity. They can have good and bad impacts on biodiversity. SNH, FCS, the agriculture sector all have interests. In the private sector Scottish Land & Estates, Scottish Gamekeepers Association, NFUS, broadly support the status quo of local voluntary management. NGOs have greater scrutiny of it. The Deer Scotland Act with its recording of cull data, control measures, is not much applied yet. The Rural Affairs Committee in 2014 looked at how the Act functions, agreed it was too soon to say, and the issue is parked till 2016. NGOs have range of views, SNH is receding from protected areas at least internally, in the context of budget cuts, so the status quo looks set to continue. At best we may see tighter enforcement of remedial actions in the next 5 to 10 years.

Marine Renewables and Fisheries - from Calum Duncan (Marine Conservation Society). As an unapologetic advocate for the 5 principles of sustainable development, one reflection from today is to convince government they are all on the same level, rather than hierarchical. Looking at the sustainable economy part of it, The Marine Scotland Act contains a duty on Ministers to act and mitigate on climate change, a legal hook for renewable development interests. Fisheries overlaps with Marine Protected Areas, the status quo, the old unstoppable force meeting an immovable object. Stakeholders are arguing that fisheries are currently sustainable while the Marine Atlas shows it is not. The voice of fisheries is the Scottish Fishermen's Federation. In run up to the Act, and the commitment for consultation on MPAs there was a broad consensus, including SFF, that MPAs are needed. The

business end was always when the actual management measures were being proposed in June. This was a watershed moment, perception that the SFF were against the proposals became an opportunity to shine a light on how other private fisheries interests, including the Creelers (70% of the industry) supported the measures, though quietly. Discussions and arguments in microcosm show difficulties that were not acknowledged, the question on how fair and equitable are the use of the resources. This was the first time people were hearing the SFF represents only 30% of the fishing industry. The Cabinet Secretary heard the bigger voice, including via the *Don't take the P campaign*, making more and better jobs, fairness and equality, pitched as progressive measures, better sustainable jobs in the long term. What the Cabinet Secretary said publicly in response to the Committee reinforces the public voice which we helped articulate. A joint letter from a coalition of interests also helped. In terms of industry influence on government the noise made by SFF has been counterproductive for them. There are frustrations with deployment of offshore windfarms in the Firth of Forth. Comparing that with fisheries management, it came down to how switched on civil servants were. So it depends on whether you can demonstrate public voice, and also depends on which civil servants you engage with. This reinforces that it is the commonality of objectives that is important. Large powerful bodies can generate muscle and arguments which do not always stand up to scrutiny.

Resistance to change and perceptions: SCDI is a wide network, goes deep into the social economy, and exists to bring commonality of cause. Development and industry is predicated on change. Some would imprint on the private sector in particular a defence of the status quo. The opposing view is that they see environmental bodies as defenders of the status quo, the people that block development. 95% of SCDI membership are into change and progress, how to shape the emerging economy as opposed to preserving the Victorian economy. Deer and Marine are examples of where dominant forces wished to resist change, neither of their industry bodies are members of SCDI.

What kind of change we all need to be working towards? Shift towards emerging economy, on deer we struggle as it is easy to point to the jobs that the current system supports. In the marine sector are you demonstrating a new economy or protecting smaller operators? There is the much bigger issue of nature conservation which MPAs were set up to address. eNGOs upped the ante on the ambition to reduce damage of trawling and fishing, shone light on existence of a mix of different fishing types inshore, opening the opportunity for more sustainable fisheries practices in more areas. There are counter arguments, and competing economic analyses. In terms of wider shared ambitions there is scope for getting a more sustainable mix of all sorts of activities, though the question has to be - is there too much trawling and fishing.

At a basic level once the private sector becomes powerful they dig their own graves, deer managers, farmers, fisheries. But who is going to call a halt and go bankrupt? Example of farming in the Netherlands which was grossly unsustainable. Once the Health Ministry stepped in agriculture lost power and change happened. That's when you need external lobbying. All these are examples are Tragedy of the Commons, when the focus is on managing the stock, whether fish or herbivores, rather than the range. Argument at the core is search for a different set of solutions that meets the needs of a wider section of society. The Scotland Act gives the context. We are no longer in the business of spending cash that is granted, solutions for social policy can be solutions for economic policy as well. It is imperative is to connect our arguments to the social and economic arguments.

Status quo is not static, it is the product of a lot of arguments over a long time. When the environment lobby and parts of private sector interested in renewable development act together you achieve a lot. There are not a lot of people lobbying for more coal.

It is important to help an industry understand itself. Example of foot and mouth and the response to stay away from countryside, the losses to the agriculture industry were tiny in comparison to other rural businesses.

You do not have to use your power to embed the status quo, there are competing narratives about what happened over two decades. Trust has broken down between industry and government over a period of time. Government has not trusted the change actors within the industry to take up a leadership vision. Change has been sprung on one part of sector because they didn't think it would happen. If government had exhibited leadership sooner it would have been smoother. Same arguments exist in agriculture. Industry needs time to make good its plans, Government need to be clear with it and give it the time.

How to de-escalate media reaction and its love of diametrically opposed arguments. This used to be more of a problem for us. We can get the message out without reliance on intermediaries.

Agriculture is propped up with subsidies, there is little incentive to change the model. Example of private water companies in England trying to deal with problems at source, bright idea of catchment management, incentive to innovate for economic reasons. When we try to influence CAP the agriculture lobby is very successful and vocal at protecting their funding pots. We could ask how representative NFUS really is. Identify those models that are allowing things to continue as they are, where money props up a failing system, giving others, like smaller farmers a voice. RSPB as a landowner is implicated in the system too, its line is that public money should pay for public goods.

Why does the farming lobby have such access and control of public policy? Farmers are seen as the small business man, the big picture is of wanting Scotland to be perceived as food producing. The power of farming lobby comes from the winter of 1944, fed the nation. The origin of EU system was as a driver to stop French farmers voting communist. When environmental policy was forged in the 1970s many MPs had land, therefore voted for incentive based control as opposed to regulatory control. Farmers are very innovative, many are in a financial trap, cannot get an income or EU support for innovation. Similar example of a boat owner who wanted a passenger licence to diversify - no financial incentives available for to be prepared for transition.

This is a problem of overweening power, we have to start again from scratch. Land is for people to feed themselves, look after themselves, to look to the future. Local people have to be directly involved, have rights in it. This is so far away from the current game. Much more to reorganising rights to land, many more jobs per acre rather than acres per job.

Role of the state intervening in the market. If we accept that we live in a capitalist system, need to use it to maximum benefit. Even privatised water companies, can make dramatic change happen. Emergent land uses are being studied in US, much about common goods, wildlife, and air quality. Private sector land use focussed on private goods can endanger these emergent land uses. National Parks are an interesting experiment in private and public goods.

The Scottish Seabird Centre is doing important things to influence public attitudes, trying to enlist its support, grown to 250,000 visitors a year, and looks at the wider marine environment and topical issues. Offshore wind-farms are a case in point, dealing with climate change issues with negative effect on seabirds, eg Firth of Forth. SCC has been approached by windfarm developer who want to reach its audience. There are opportunities for working together, to engage with intact principles, keeping editorial control, doing the missionary work about the natural environment, informing, getting issues across, so that people can see different sides of the argument. Rather than ignoring topical issues, embracing them.

ENGOS have made strides to learn language of business. Hope the Circular Economy will be a debate. We learn the language of business, and they have to understand us too. Commonwealth is not just economic, there are no jobs on a dead planet.

Evidence and what kind of data is produced, competing economic models. What place for NGOs and industry deciding on the questions that need researching? RSPB does a huge amount, not many others are investing so much. Often it doesn't matter how much you do, eg the badger cull.

Bringing solutions to government, crafting solutions government can achieve at that time. Deciding on the questions with everyone involved at the beginning. Hen harrier research a classic example. Problem in that the questions were not wide enough, not covered the land use of grouse moors, using vast tracts of land for what is not an economic activity. We also need social scientific research. The absolute human rights of owners are coming out top.

Find out what the other side thinks. New model might be creating a shared knowledge base, include the economic, environmental and social, discussing the system. Scientific thinking is linear, we need systems thinking.

On the Firth of Forth windfarm it was clear there would be huge fatalities, universities have a role too. Issue about trust. Moving from that frame to recognise mutual dependence, actually have to start building relationships of trust, acknowledge both have to change, accept compromises. That's one narrative, may be simplistic, in every walk of life, people have powerful roles. Needs to be space for the constructive challenger.

Aims and objectives of environment and economy are not at odds, all know that short term capitalism is death, that sustainable growth, economy are the way forward. The ones that don't get it have significant influence and power, all have a role on bringing our peers up to speed.

In the global context, CAP is EU wide, globally industries are polluting elsewhere. Every argument you make is undermined by your policies in other parts of the world.

Theoretically could have a development in the right place, flipping the paradigm, in a post climate change world environmental enhancement needs to be seen as an opportunity.

Environmental development is the common ground. We have a Land Use Strategy, supposed to look at all of the mechanisms and align policies. It is not really delivering.

Plenary report back:

1. Acknowledge we are in time of accelerating change, increasingly it's a reality if we try to present an environmental case for change we will not succeed, and we need to make a convincing case on social and economic grounds too. Change whether motivated from environmental or business perspective needs to encompass a much wider view than it has in the past.
2. Power and how it is exercised. Recognise biggest difficulties arise where consolidations hang on to the status quo where the triple bottom line is not happening. Where the greatest foes are, we need to challenge them. We think of others as resisting change, they think of us as resisting change
3. There is lots of progress already on both sides of the argument, old conservation versus development chestnut still comes up. There has been lot of progress in seeing they are entirely interdependent. Need to acknowledge the contribution of both and build trust. Trust is a key part of it, certain people in leadership positions in both sectors, needs to cascade down, so that trust also spreads.
4. Agree with all stakeholders on the questions before starting with any new research.
5. Elephant in the room is that we are tinkering at the edges of a model of existence which is thoroughly unsustainable.

3. Partnership working between eNGOs and government

Facilitator: Aedan Smith, Notes Beryl Leatherland

Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime, Scotland - Eddie Palmer (Scottish Badgers). This was set up by Mike Russell in 2003. There are 29 member organisations, 12 of these are government, police, SNH, National

Wildlife Crime Unit, Crown office and FCS. (9 are wildlife NGOs and SSPCA, 8 are country sports bodies. PAWS has various groupings:

Executive – chaired by the Minister and highly scripted

Plenary

Sub groups – which are currently not working

Nobody has worked on process, communications and objectives for the arrangement. Government adopts an “inside the tent” approach. Apparently the Minister said at Plenary that “I hope some of the constituent groups are going to do some work”. It is difficult to see how PAWS fits in in relation to wildlife crime. There needs to be a review of PAWS on the lines of PAW south of the border. The partnership working isn’t effective and doesn’t deliver. Questions were “what governance was in place at the start and what commitments were there such as resources? These were apparently in place initially; and are there any terms of reference? No, and hampered as trust between the groups is not there.

Campaign for more National Parks in Scotland - Ross Anderson (SCNP/APRS). Scotland has marvellous landscapes but their value has been appreciated only recently in the setting up of our 2 national parks, despite the legacy of John Muir. The topic of NPs was first raised in the Westminster Parliament as long ago as 1879. It is believed that SCNP has influenced SG and a strategy group was set up; this didn’t go to stage 2, despite the SNP 2011 manifesto giving some commitment to identifying further NPs. They have subsequently claimed there is no economic case for setting up more NPs. More than 70% of Harris residents would like a NP but the SG said that the local authority had to be supportive which they are not. More recently SCNP and APRS have prepared a paper showing alternative governance strategies. There was a petition sent to the Petitions Committee and this was progressed to a further evidence taking session, but then at the last meeting of the committee this was stopped abruptly (believed to be a fudge and a politically driven decision). Efforts are now being put into supporting a bottom up approach in Dumfries and Galloway and in Mull where local groups with this ambition have been set up. In D&G there is a threat to the local amenity from the proposed pylon line and this has been a local driver. There was a recent meeting in Aviemore re the NP movement and there was a presentation from a Norwegian exponent who showed photos from decades ago and of the current time, showing the positive influences on land use changes over the years associated with NP management. There are 300 NPs in the world so Scotland is very much almost at the bottom of the pile with only 2; the original 2000 Act had a vision and this has not been delivered. There are identifiable benefits of NPs and it should be noted that no NP once set up has ever been disbanded. SCNP and APRS see themselves as critical friends in their pursuance of this cause. Within the existing parks there is good practice but there are 2 very different origins and approaches, and consequently the scope for partnerships is different. The 2 parks are very different despite coming under the same legislation.

In the LLTNP there is the Great Trossachs Forest where bodies such as RSPB and the Woodland Trust have worked together with locals with the aim of creating a mosaic habitat with visitor facilities and community partnerships. There is also the Friends of Loch Lomond group who are very active and lobby actively. In the CNP there are wildlife partnerships. In the NPs in the USA the friends groups run a lot of the services and generate profits for reinvestment. If the websites of our 2 parks are scrutinised they are very different in their management and operation. There are different communities of interest involved (not only local people). Connections have to be made to harness the varieties of communities of interest, and there is a need especially for land management research.

Points and Discussion

There was some discussion of the roles and work of the Cairngorms Campaign and Badenoch & Strathspey Conservation Group both of which have been critical of the CNP in the past. Now there is consideration of achieving more volunteer input maybe leading to a friends group. Again it was noted that threats generate action; in the East Cairngorms there has been raptor persecution associated with the extensive grouse moors and within this context there are active groupings. The context is crucial; and where there are difficulties it is perhaps not the

partnerships that fail but aspects of the context. In our NPs their economic policy and models are challenging for partnership working. The 2000 Act is challenging to deliver but gives a framework for partnership working. Establishing partnerships, facilitating and enabling are all interrelated.

The nature of a partnership was raised; how relaxed into a partnership should LINK be and how relaxed should government be? Again context plays a part if funding is involved. Partnerships are not necessarily a virtue especially if governments always control them. They are a means to an end. Scrutiny is important.

At present there is not an equal partnership between SG and the people. For example it is very difficult to achieve anything via public consultation; this is a process, the box is ticked but no ideas are taken on. Good ideas are discarded/ignored without any justification. The rhetoric doesn't match the reality.

There was some discussion around what exactly constitutes a partnership and whether true partnerships are as such or some other sort of association. A partnership should have a common vision and objectives, a memorandum of understanding, governance systems, a pooling of resources and a strategy for dispute resolution. Some partnerships in fact are really only loose affiliations; groups brought together to work on some mutual interest but with different objectives and no shared working. Regulators work with industry, waste sites, agriculture and so on and gather intelligence, engage, discuss and help to solve issues and even prosecute; but these are not partnerships, despite some long associations. So in this case the term partnership is used very loosely. In the case of a specific example such as rewilding a wetland, there will be a formal arrangement as indicated above and with terms, almost a contract. The term partnership can be used quite loosely and inappropriately.

Q. How does a large NGO with land, resources, lots of members, lots of different funders, manage partnerships?

A. RSPB is good at this. There is perhaps a risky approach to partnership working as the conservation importance comes first, above funding issues. There are difficulties in working with smaller NGOs on projects. In a project several groups must work together to achieve the objectives and there might be a long timescale so there has to be a lot of trust. This was emphasised as was the importance of interpersonal relationships. Mutual agreements can lead to trustful secure partnerships. This is more difficult to achieve if there are funding issues.

Some arrangements are formal multilateral agreements rather than partnerships. There might be a common aim but not all might share the same view of this. It is important to recognise common ground and participants must recognise there is a benefit to their organisation.

Some specific examples of "partnerships" were explored:

IUCN is a partnership between governments and NGOs. If there is centralisation of power (by government]) then this isn't a partnership. Devolving power to communities was explored and how this might work (or not!).

Is there anything that eNGOs can do to engage more with communities and influence government? Community Development Trusts in the CNP were mentioned; these have some power to implement and deliver, for example on community land management. It has to be recognised that there are communities of place but also communities of interest (the latter may not be local to an area but they have interests and concerns which should be taken account of). For instance there is nationwide interest in NPs, beyond local communities, many people have a stake in them.

Community Councils were recognised as being a poor model for partnership working in their current form.

Community Action Planning is another model, eg leading to the Loch Lomond Charrettes and in providing a vehicle for consultation.

The challenge of increasing the level of involvement in community participation in, for example, consultations was recognised as a problem area.

Churches have an engagement structure – a possible model to look at.

The relative sizes of organisations is a factor.

Funding - can be discretionary. With funding can come a loss of independence.

There must be a clear understanding of a partnership and its structure.

Report to Plenary

1. Problems of defining what is meant by partnership, may be at the root of the problem. May be more of an association of organisations, or a forum for discussion, be clear about the parameters, terms of reference at the start, or inevitable they won't deliver.
2. Importance of working with communities, engage with communities of interest or locality more often, sometimes that slips in the middle, something eNGOs can work with the public sector more on.
3. Importance of trust between individuals in the organisations, to make progress.

4. How strong and independent is the eNGO voice?

Facilitator Elizabeth Leighton, Notes by Esther Brooker.

Wildlife Protection – Craig McAdam (Buglife). Craig hadn't heard of LINK until he started working with Buglife – but is aware of successes that have taken place over last 20 years, eg the Marine Act, Climate Act. Advocacy in 2 broad categories:

- Developed policy from the inside (robust, outspoken)
- Collaborated outside

Example of the first. Wildlife crime report – generated some debate and discussion, and has helped to ensure some action (Police Scotland, better protection for raptors)

Example of the second. Non-native species

When should we as LINK say 'enough is enough' and take a more robust approach?

Agriculture - Pete Richie (Nourish Scotland). What if we did agriculture as if people on the planet mattered? Not much traction in the last 10 years – the planet is already 'on fire' – no mention of climate change. Food is driving wildlife loss on a global scale – does anyone know/care about that, and how does it translate to our food and drink strategy? As a movement, we don't have enough boots on the ground. Need to clarify what our one big ask is so that we can mobilise peoples' support. We do have an independent voice, but at the moment it's just not strong enough.

Discussion

Success – Land Reform Act. And in general, success in making thing less bad than they would have been.

Ten years' work by LINK on marine conservation – secured Marine Act and the right ambition to go with it. We are now at a pivotal point in this process– mixed signals on implementation – where do we draw the boundaries of our success? Doesn't just stop with securing the legislation. Sometimes hard to identify where actual policies are making the difference (eg with Climate Change).

Site specific examples – e.g. Heathrow airport expansion, Lingerabay – but consequences are often felt outwith that area. Easier to campaign to stop something than it is to change something.

Hilltracks – a lot of work being done by a few to make sure the revised legislation is going to work – ongoing process of holding government to account, not just stopping with securing the legislative change.

Capacity constraints make it hard to keep up with the scrutiny of implementation of legislation – long-term commitment required.

Success – awareness-raising – e.g. REFIT process had the highest number of responses to a public consultation (500,000) ‘the public speaking for nature’.

On wildlife protection we were clear about where we wanted to be and where the public wanted to be. On CAP the government position was that ‘Scottish food is good’ and that is what is being promoted, and that is what influences the subsidy regime. We want to be in tune with the public mood, but what if the public mood isn’t where we want it to be? Sometimes we might need to shift the public mood. Scottish food is advertised as been ‘green’ and healthy – we are being drawn into it because we know this is not always the case. To support government we need to find ways of evaluating how green and clean is actually is. There are times when this is the right approach.

Are there any examples of where we have/can become funded by government as a result of the work we have been doing? Can our voice end up ‘muted by government gold’? How important is our independent voice in relation to this point?

Should we try and align our advocacy to support government policy? Sometimes it helps us to feel effective just to be in the room – 10 years ago that conversation might not have been happening. Too often we don’t question an opportunity to be part of a group – but we should always ask ourselves how strategic that is, and whether sometimes we might have greater success maintaining an external perspective. NB LINK is a diverse network which may not always agree on an approach – but conversely, how much to we reflect that breadth of input?

Advantages of devolution – much wider public engagement, and LINK is being involved more and more. Is there are risk that we will become regarded as part of the brickwork and our position as a critical friend is diminished? Strength of environment movement is known and sometimes feared by elected reps – the ability to mobilise the public to support a more robust approach. In this case it’s not an either/or, but there is a balance to be struck between being robust and supporting the government.

Stakeholders (actors) – wider civil society mechanisms – Stop Climate Chaos is successful because it reaches outside eNGOs. As NGOs we are weak on our engagement with local authorities, who are often the drivers in cities on what we are looking to achieve. We need to be clear on issues we wish to change (eg use of pesticides), rather than ‘pussyfoot’ around these.

Cycling – Pedal on Parliament – everyone is agreed that society should be more actively travelling (74% Edinburgh residents think more money should be invested in cycling – but this is not obvious on the street). We need to focus on what the public want, especially focusing on environmental arguments (eg air pollution).

Can LINK campaign on something high level that all members can get behind – would that be more effective in impacting the public at large? Would need to be quite clever to get all the key messages across. Doesn’t need to come at the expense of other campaigns – other groups may still have the capacity to run more specific campaigns. Perhaps we can just become more angry/creative/passionate – not to the cost of being evidence-based,

but sometimes not getting bogged down in the details and sometimes throwing the toys out of the pram over certain issues could be effective – we are not likely to not be invited back into the room. Have to consider relationships with government – have to be comfortable to speak out or being back in the room afterwards.

Perhaps working on the policy all the time, rather than the actual issues, is something we are doing wrong – need to make the policies resolve the issues. Difficult in the face of changing goalposts – either by government or just as ‘fashions’ change.

Examples of creative approaches – Don’t Take the P campaign. Can sometimes be a capacity constraint that prevents us from taking this approach all the time/where necessary.

Picking up on Bridget Campbell’s points:

- Jobs
- Equality
- Communities

Eg Food. 45% of Scottish food is processed in Scotland – good jobs to be had. How do we connect this with a greener food system (which will create more jobs)?

Policy ask: 10% food to go through short supply chains by 2020 (local food) – we are under 2% at the moment. Specific targets on reducing antibiotics, pesticides etc. Need to make food more accessible to all (price of fresh food) – ask: Scottish farms to feed Scottish people.

Scottish food and drink strategy aims are good, but it is how they get there that is an issue – we need a one-liner that challenges how the government implements and achieve that level of success and make the public think. Allies? Celebrities (e.g. Jamie Oliver school dinners campaign)? Consumer campaigns (influence what people buy)? Putting the control back in the public’s hands (eg grow their own)? Identify people in the food industry that share our vision – the farmers unions don’t represent all farmers (subvert the opposition).

Food coalition – looking at pushing for a Food, Farming and Health Act – equality of jobs, community ownership. Need to be careful with all these thoughts that we are not trying to make our positions match up with the government policy. Also need a plan for what we would do with new legislation after we get it.

Pick one issue, build a vision, use that to create public support (emotional ask).

Across the whole of LINK, but interpreted and delivered in different ways by different TFs? Needs to have a positive vision. Campaign asks with policy goals.

How do we get organisational support to resource the campaign? What will we be doing to make the minister want to speak to LINK about the issue? Will we be inside or outside the tent and how will our strategy reflect that?

Report to Plenary

1. Yes indeed we do have a strong and independent voice, but often are not aware of it or are a bit shy. Use it more and be confident of our mandate from members and the public.
2. Examples of lots of success and ideas of doing better, learn from past campaigns
3. Three point strategy. Pick one issue set within an ‘onion’ of coherent strategy. Provide a vision and build public support behind the vision.
3. Scottish Government priorities. Yes have a view, no to being co-opted to follow because it is there,
4. One vision delivered in different ways by different groups of members.

5. Be clear about our measures of success. Build in follow through so that implementation of legislation is good.
6. LINK's capacity, align the work, prioritising what is happening and making it stronger.
7. Should we be in our out of tent? Depends on the campaign, choose with eyes open, a foot in both camps, be confident in our ability to do both, be assertive, speak with passion, believe in the power of our voice.

PLENARY DISCUSSION

Q. LINK and how it operates. If we want to get more traction in the next 5 years should we be **speaking with more unity**?

That's always been a big question in LINK, as the voice at all or the vehicle, it is as far as we've got, rubbed up against members' wish for sovereignty.

This can be a definite weakness, we do not take a Congress decision to follow through. Also the forum method of operation can be the source of real strength.

Q. Are the challenges identified now not requiring a different method?

Origins of LINK was as an enabling group, to have others around you in support. Another big thing was mutual learning. Environmental issues are very complex, the group learning is important. We cannot get together on everything, the world is not like that. We can find and build a mutual understanding even when we disagree. If you cannot campaign on everything it is not a weakness. The strength of an enabling organisation is the learning that goes on.

LINK could move to discussion around fewer bigger themes, not changing the nature of what we work on as members. Maybe as LINK we need to review the issues we need to have an impact on, rather than continuous chipping away at lots of things.

If its issue of public engagement, fewer is better. Hope the group learning can continue. Maybe some more time limited groups to produce one side of A4.

Q. **What are we calling for**, not sure we have a voice. There are multiple opportunities now for engaging with decision makers. We need to make decisions on where to focus, LINK's weakest point.

Sense here that LINK could be doing more, that the **scale of challenge is such that we need to raise our game**. Are we capable of more and how do we help bring that about? We should not write a report on the economics of biodiversity, instead stand with SCDI and get it done elsewhere, the scale of the challenge is so great.

The point of scale of crisis is not sufficient to think about how we up our game. Society has not begun to grasp the nature of disruption of climate change and this is partly our fault. We can claim credit for getting it onto the agenda, the problem is it still framed as an environmental issue, rather than an existential issue. Wonder what our grandchildren will think, have we stepped up to the plate? LINK has a function which is well defined. eNGOs and allies outside the sector, something like SCCS, or help strengthen SCCS to form something stronger? Ask ourselves whether we are doing enough to create a vision.

The magnitude and urgency means we need to think very deeply. We have had some successes, cannot continue to repeat our failures, using same tools, lexicons, etc.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) run by ULab are open to anyone. 30,000 people around the world follow an Edx course generating community leadership, very different way of expressing it, thinking through what it means, community leadership, bringing the future into the present, how do we get to the future, listening deeply, creating alliances with anyone anywhere, nobody is in better position to grasp that leadership than LINK to make

a single coherent message about where we need to be in the future. These courses are freely available, with great materials. ULab's starting point that lots of problems result from disconnects between people and nature, what we want to be and what we are, the spiritual aspirations and how they are expressed day to day. Very interesting points about styles of management and emergent properties. Society has increasingly adopted task orientated managerial approach, which are important and helpful with some problems, not so good with open problems, like nature management.

Related to that, picking up on how we fragment issues, when they are all the same problem, emerge from same sets of issues to do with empathy. We can make life difficult for ourselves. All the SD Goals are interdependent. Need to be thinking of all of them as you articulate the case. A consistent and coherent vision.

Several groups came up with picking a unified issue. On raising our game, if not now when? There is so much work to do, we are flogging our guts out already. We need to respond to it in a different way, not taking it all on ourselves, rather learn from the MOOC, make a big push towards co-production, trust that there are others with us on this, find them and work with them, share with them, take that risk and find it liberating, a powerful endorsement of what we are doing. If we do pick an issue such as food, others could work with us.

eNGOs are quite brave, being confident enough to provide a bit of a lead, eg the smoking ban, campaigners were behind that to put case forward, doing it in a coordinated way, some of the climate stuff has been a good start.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE DAY

Joyce McMillan, LINK President Designate.

Thank you for inviting me today and for doing huge honour of being asked to be President. I won't bring the same weight of political nous as Ross. I am overwhelmed by sheer weight of expertise and range and begun to get some kind of sense of it. Campaigning, researching, working with communities and working with government, I'm feeling very humbled by everything I heard today, hope to help, and to keep an eye on the big picture and the extent of the turning point the human race is reaching now. I see that there is no way I can dictate, and have no wish to, and will work to push environmental issues up the agenda.

As a veteran of the Constitutional Convention I know that a lot of organisations come to a moment of truth in terms of their relationship with government. For example on biodiversity, it is still not improving, that feeling of hitting the buffers. You get into the tent, gain award winning legislation, and when it comes to crunch there is not the resources to follow through - *events dear boy*, partly government as a talker of talk rather than walking the walk, not to be unduly harsh on the SNP.

What is happening is a structural issue to do with the whole impotence of government. The economic system is so locked in with so many unsustainable things. There is a crisis in the inability of government to do what it knows it should do. It is doing one thing with one hand, and another with the other. Potentially it is tragic. After 16 years of devolution the mood in the room is to be more assertive, to push more and oblige less, to help government in different ways. One way of helping government is to clear the political space to enable them to move, by stating a more radical position. I see all the sources of strength that would enable the member bodies to act. Concern about the environmental future is spreading. There will be more member bodies. You are absolutely right about what is needed, evidence based approaches always give strength which we are accustomed to, could use that even better.

Search for new sources of support, there will be far more groups and individuals wanting to get into this debate. I'm very well aware that world of arts is much more interested in and sensitive to the climate crisis. Creative carbon is the organisation for the sector, if that's replicated in other spheres, there are more springing up all the

time. We should be able to mobilise them. Local government may become more powerful. Also MSPs can have quite different views from government, there are a range of allies.

Building popular support: The Taoist image about the shoal of fish that turn in unison, you never know the minute when something is going to catch fire. You have to plan well, and wait for the moment. I look forward to watching this next phase in Scottish and world politics.

I'm pleased to hear talk of the big picture, of daring to dream, to think creatively. Obviously there is a creative dimension to talk in a different language that captures the imagination.

Let us be ambitious and not accept decline of the public sphere, refusing to accept that it will be about 10 % smaller than in other comparable economies without really debating if that is the direction we want to go. Without a strong public sphere, without public resources, this will be a desperately uphill struggle. I look forward to being as supportive as possible.

Acknowledgements

Steering group, Vicki Swales, Beryl Leatherland, Phoebe Cochrane, Andy Myles, Nick Underdown, Alice Walsh.

Thanks to our speakers, Bridget Campbell, Ross Finnie, Ross Martin, Jonathan Hughes, Deborah Long.

Thanks to Facilitators, Aedan Smith, Phoebe Cochrane, Elizabeth Leighton, Simon Pepper.

Thanks for case studies; Vicki Swales, Charles Dundas, Calum Duncan, Diarmid Hearn, Eddie Palmer, Ross Anderson, Pete Ritchie, Craig Macadam.

Thanks to workshop scribes; Lisa Webb, Alice Walsh, Beryl Leatherland, Esther Brooker.

Thanks to all who participated, listed here.

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Bridget Campbell	Scottish Government
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Paul Walton	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Paula Charleson	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
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Pete Ritchie	Nourish Scotland
Peter Argyle	Cairngorms National Park Authority
Phoebe Cochrane	LINK staff
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Ross Anderson	Scottish Council for National Parks
Ross Finnie	LINK President
Ross Martin	Scottish Council for Development & Industry
Sam Gardner	WWF Scotland
Sarah Robinson	Royal Zoological Society of Scotland

Sheila George	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Simon Jones	Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority
Simon Pepper	LINK Honorary Fellow
Tessa Jones	Badenoch & Strathspey Conservation Group
Tim Ambrose	Cairngorms Campaign & LINK Treasurer
Tom Brock	Scottish Seabird Centre
Tom Leatherland	Scottish Wild Land Group
Vicki Swales	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Report compiled by Alice Walsh, 2 December 2015.